Extra No. 201

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The Gujarat Government Gazette

EXTRAORDINARY

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

Vol. LXVII] WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2026 / ASHADHA 24, 1948

Separate paging is given to this Part in order that it may be filed as a Separate Compilation.

PART IV-B

Rules and Orders (Other than those published in Parts I, I-A, and I-L) made by the Government of Gujarat under the Gujarat Acts

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT DEPARTMENT

NOTIFICATION

Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar, 15th July, 2026

No.: GHL-10/SJED/GCR/e-file/17/2026/1483/CHH-2:- WHEREAS the draft of Gujarat State Child Protection Policy was published at pages 129-1 to 129-5 in the Gujarat Government Gazette, Extraordinary, Part IV-B, dated the 1st April, 2025, under the Government Notification, Social Justice and Empowerment Department No. GHL-05/SJED/ 2025/1/2088/CHH, dated the 1st April, 2025, inviting objections or suggestions from such persons likely to be affected thereby within the period of ninety days from the date of publication of the said notification in the *Official Gazette;*

AND WHEREAS the objections or suggestions received from such persons on the said draft notification have been considered by the Government and also sub-rule (5) of rule 3 of the POCSO Rules, 2020, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, the subordinate rules framed thereunder, the directions issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, the School Safety and Hostel Guidelines issued by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), the National Policy for Children, 2013, and the National Plan of Action for Children, 2016;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Government of Gujarat hereby publishes the Gujarat State Child Protection Policy, namely: —

Preamble:

All children deserve a happy childhood and the opportunity to lead a dignified life safe from violence, exploitation, neglect, deprivation and discrimination. The Constitution of India recognizes children as equal right holders and grants highest priority for their protection and well-being. India is also signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Constitution of India and the national policy for children, 2013 has a strong legal framework to protect children which include the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015; the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) with amendment in 2021 (JJ Act); the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2020 (POCSO) and Rules 2020; Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act 1994; the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act 2005; the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009; Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006; with amendment in 2016; the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016; IT and Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023; Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016; National Disaster Management Guidelines: School Safety Policy, 2013; Mental Healthcare Act; HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act; Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act; Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023; Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 and judgements of Hon. Supreme Court / Hon. High Courts related to this subject.

The Policy also reflects India's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, CEDAW and other relevant international human rights instruments. It further aligns with the National Policy for Children, 2013, the National Plan of Action for Children, 2016 and Sustainable Development Goals.

The Government of Gujarat recognizes the rights of all children and the importance of upholding these rights for the achievement of Gujarat's and India's growth and development. The State is committed to ensuring protection of all children within the State, based on a rights-based approach, which implies promoting the safety and security of children within the framework of their legally recognized rights including children's right to participation.

1. Short Title:

1) This policy may be called the Gujarat State Child Protection Policy, 2026.

2) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the *Official Gazette.*

2. Vision:

a) To create a society in Gujarat where every child is safe, respected, protected, empowered and facilitated to realize his/her full potential, ensuring his/her rights to safety, education, health, and holistic development through participation and empowerment.

b) Every child in the State, without discrimination on grounds of religion, caste, gender, social, economic, political, cultural or geographical background shall be protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and shall have equitable access to child protection services across all sectors.

c) To align the vision with Viksit Bharat and Viksit Gujarat, emphasizing social protection and development for all children, and also emphasizing inclusivity and child rights.

3. Key Objectives of the Policy:

a) To create robust, child-centric and effective child protection mechanism.

b) To build the capacity of institutions, law enforcement and caregivers to provide effective and child friendly care and protection.

c) Promote and strengthen inter-departmental, inter-agency and multi-sectoral convergence and accountability.

4. Scope of the Policy:

a) The Gujarat State Child Protection Policy shall apply to all government departments, statutory bodies, government agencies, NGOs, civil societies, institutions, and individuals who come into direct or indirect contact with children, including Corporate and Business Houses, Industries, Media Organizations, Resident Welfare Associations, Religious and Faith-based organizations, Child Care Institutions, and all areas where children live, learn, play, receive care, or participate.

b) It also covers children in vulnerable situations, including children in need of care and protection, children in conflict with law, children with disabilities, migrant children, orphans, children belonging to Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and other marginalized communities, children affected by trafficking, children in street situations, children in institutional and alternative care, transgender and intersex children, children affected by HIV /AIDS or Chronic illness, children affected by natural disasters, and children in conflict zones.

c) This Policy applies to everyone within the jurisdiction of the State of Gujarat.

5. Definitions:

a) "Child" means any person under the age of 18 years or one who has not completed eighteen years of age as per Section 2 (k) of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

b) "Child Protection" means the prevention of, and response to, exploitation, abuse, neglect, harmful practices and violence against children.

c) "Child Protection System" comprises human resources, finance, laws and policies, governance, monitoring and data collection as well as protection and response services and care management of children. It includes different actors – children, families, communities, those working at subnational or national level and those working internationally.

Under Integrated Child Protection Scheme (now as Mission Vatsalya), Child Protection encompasses protecting children from actual or potential risks to their life, dignity, development and well-being; reducing their vulnerability to harm; preventing exclusion from social protection systems; and ensuring timely access to care, protection, rehabilitation and justice whenever required. Unless otherwise specified, definitions contained in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and applicable child related laws shall apply.

6. Guiding Principles:

The Policy is based on the principle of Zero tolerance of child abuse and exploitation. Additionally, the following principles should be applied in framing child protection policy:

a) Best Interest of the Child

b) Equality and non-discrimination

c) Right to Survival, Development and Well-being

d) Respect to the views of the Child

e) Dignity, Respect and Child Friendly Practices

f) Family Strengthening and Preservation

g) Alternative Care as a Measure of Last Resort

h) Safety and Freedom from Violence

i) Privacy and Confidentiality

j) Accountability

k) Partnership & Convergence

7. Government Priorities: Recognizing the evolving nature of risks faced by children in Gujarat, the Government shall prioritize the following strategies:

a) Prevention of Violence Against Children: The Government recognizes that prevention is the most effective and sustainable approach to child protection. Accordingly, the government commits to – Strengthen Families at the first line of Protection; Build Protective Communities; Promote Behavior Change

b) Create Safe Environment: Every setting where children live, learn or receive services shall progressively adopt child safeguarding measures. The government shall promote Child-safe schools, child-safe health care facilities; child-safe child care institutions; child-safe workplaces; child-safe digital environments; child-safe public spaces

c) Ensure Timely Protection and Quality Response: Every child requiring protection shall have timely access to coordinate, child friendly and rights-based services. The Government commits to early identification and referral; child-sensitive justice; recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration; Mental Health and Psychosocial support services.

d) Strengthening Child Protection Systems: The Government commits to strengthening institutions responsible for child protection through adequate financing; skilled human resources; technology-enabled information systems; child budgeting; operational guidelines and continuous capacity development of the child protection workforce.

e) Ensure Online safety and Emerging risks: The government shall strengthen cyber security, prevention and response mechanisms relating to use of internet, social media platforms and digital technology.

8. Implementation Framework: Implementation shall be undertaken through a phased manner.

a) Department of Social Justice and Empowerment shall be the Nodal Department – to coordinate implementation, lead convergence, issue operational guidelines, oversee monitoring and facilitate annual review.

b) Every Department shall prepare annual implementation plans aligned to this policy.

c) Allied departments shall develop operational guidelines, protocols within one-year period of notification of this policy.

d) Government shall establish a continuous learning framework for all child protection and allied functionaries.

e) All organizations and institutions should designate responsibility to a specific member / member of staff for ensuring that procedures and arrangements are in place within the organization to protect children and report any abuse, exploitation or neglect in line with the guidelines and existing laws.

9. Institutional Accountability: Effective implementation of the Policy requires clearly defined institutional responsibilities. The Government of Gujarat shall provide overall policy direction, develop, implement and monitor State Action Plans for Child Protection and ensure adequate financing.

a) Professionals who provide services to children (teachers, counsellors, doctors/ other health workers and others) must follow child protection policy for reporting and taking action if they become concerned about a child's safety and welfare.

b) Any individual who suspects physical, sexual or emotional abuse including online abuse of children, circulation of child sexual abuse materials, child marriage, child labour, child trafficking, maltreatment of children, discrimination against child on the account of gender, caste, religion, language, disability or any other, abandonment or neglect of a child, must report the incidence to CHILDLINE 1098/112 or any other helpline for that matter, police or Child Welfare Committee. Identity of the informant shall be protected and shall not be made public.

c) Medical establishments (hospital and clinics), doctors and health workers cannot refuse treatment or discriminate on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, disability, caste, religion, tribe, language, marital status, occupation, political belief, or other status. Refusal of medical care to survivors/victims of sexual violence and acid attack amounts to an offence under Section - 200 of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 read with Section - 397 of The Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023

10. Monitoring Framework: The Government of Gujarat, and all other relevant authorities, civil society organizations, families and the wider community, shall work in collaboration and partnership to effectively realize the vision of this Gujarat Child Protection Policy and achieve results for children.

a) The Chief Secretary, Government of Gujarat shall review the implementation of Gujarat CPP annually.

b) The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of Gujarat shall facilitate this review in coordination with the concerned departments that provide services to children.

c) Monitoring the implementation of this Policy, shall be undertaken by the Gujarat Child Protection Society (GSCPS).

11. Training & Capacity Building: The State shall promote regular training and capacity building to strengthen the knowledge, skills, and competencies of all stakeholders for the prevention, identification, reporting, and effective response to child protection concerns, including

a) Institutions and organizations working directly with children must develop age-appropriate modules and materials for orientating children on child abuse, online safety and services available for them.

b) Institutions and organizations working directly with children must train all employees on child rights, provisions of the POCSO Act, 2012; JJ Act 2015 and other legislation for children and ensure that corporal punishment, bullying and any other form of abuse is prevented. All employees should be familiar with signs and behaviors that may be indicative of child abuse/exploitation or neglect.

12. Guidelines for Organizations, Institutions and Establishments

a) All departments, institutions and organizations should develop a child protection policy and code of conduct for employees in line with the national guidelines and various legislations for protection and welfare of children and display it appropriately.

b) All employees/ contractual workers must sign the declaration for child protection and agree to abide by it (Draft declaration at Annexure - 1).

c) The CHILDLINE 1098/112 or any other helpline for that matter and contact details of designated officer for child protection must be displayed appropriately.

d) Corporate houses and industries must establish and strengthen monitoring mechanisms to ensure those industries/subsidiaries are not using child labour in any form.

e) Institutions and organizations working directly with children must ensure stringent background check (including police verification) of all employees regular or contractual, volunteers and others who may come in contact with children.

f) Crèches/mobile crèches for employee's children including those on daily wages/contractual basis if the number of employees is fifty or above; otherwise, appropriate space and facility for baby care to be provided for mothers with infants.

g) Child-friendly zones must be developed in all public places and safe spaces for mothers to keep their infants.

13. Code of Conduct: The code of conduct for employees/contractual workers must lay down that they should always treat children with empathy and respect, regardless of race, color, gender, sexuality, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. The code of conduct must be laid down that staff members must never:

a) Use language or behavior towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.

b) Develop or induce or support in any way physical/sexual relationships with children.

c) Develop any form of relationship or arrangement with children which could in any way be deemed to be exploitative or abusive.

d) Place a child at risk of abuse or exploitation or be aware of these and not report it or not do anything about it.

e) Organizations who undertake research and collect data on children, directly from children or indirectly from parents/community must ensure that children are not harmed or traumatized in any way during the process. All research staff must be trained on ethical practices and child friendly procedures.

14. Compliance and Action:

a) All departments/individual/organization/institution shall work to achieve objectives of the policy.

b) Failure/willful non action by any government department, institution, agency, organization, or individual covered under this Policy to comply with its provisions shall invite appropriate administrative,

disciplinary, contractual, or legal action, as applicable, in accordance with the relevant service rules, departmental regulations, contractual conditions and applicable laws. (Refer to Annexure - 2).

15. This policy shall be reviewed every three years or earlier to monitor the progress and outcomes of the policy.

Annexure - 1

Declaration by all employees/employer

I ,…… , ……..… (name and position of the employee), from…….. (name of the organization) hereby declare that:

1. I will always respect all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity;
2. Support their right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
3. I will not employ any child as defined under Child Labour (prohibition and regulation) Amendment Act, 2016.
4. I will always report any case of child abuse, exploitation and neglect which comes to my knowledge to appropriate authority and will not harm or abuse any child physically, emotionally or sexually.

(Name of the employee)

(Name and designation of the employer)

(Name of the organization/institution)

Annexure - 2

The following offences/ behaviors are punishable by law and it is the duty of every adult citizen to abide by these laws:

Offences / Behaviours	Laws
Sexual assault, sexual harassment, use of child for pornographic purpose	Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 and other applicable law/provisions.
Production, dissemination and use of child sexual abuse materials	The Information Technology Act, 2000 and other applicable law/provisions.
Disclosing identity of the child victim to anyone other than appropriate authority	Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, JJ Act, 2015 and other applicable law/provisions.
Sale and procurement of children for any purpose including illegal adoption, trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, use of children by militant groups, giving children intoxicating liquor, narcotic drug or tobacco products or psychotropic substances, offences against disabled children, trafficking of children for sexual exploitation/exploitative labour/other reasons and, kidnapping	JJ Act 2015; Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1956; Sections 143 and 144 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 and other applicable law/provisions.
Corporal punishment in child care institutions	JJ Act, 2015, Section-68 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 and other applicable law/provisions.
Corporal Punishment in schools	Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, Section-65 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 and other applicable law/provisions.
Adopting a child without due procedure through CARINGS and child welfare committees/ promoting or facilitating such illegal adoption	JJ Act, 2015, Sections 143 and 144 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023) and other applicable law/ provisions.

Offences / Behaviours	Laws
Employment of children below 14 years in any occupation or industry	Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016, Sections 146 and 147 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023) and other applicable law/provisions.
Employment of children 15-18 years in hazardous occupation or industries	Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016, Sections 146 and 147 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023) and other applicable law/provisions.
Marrying a child/promoting or solemnizing child marriage	Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 and other applicable law/provisions.
Pre-natal diagnostic techniques for determination of the sex of the fetus leading to female feticide.	(PCPNDT) Act, 1994 and other applicable law/provisions.

By order and in the name of the Governor of Gujarat,

KISHOR RATHAVA,

Deputy Secretary to Government.

Government Central Press, Gandhinagar.

Signature Not Verified
Signed by : BHOLUSINGH G THAKUR
Senior Manager
Government Central Press,
Gandhinagar
Date : 2026.07.15 19:55:41 IST